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ABSTRACT

A 2-year study designed to develop ways to improve both the quantity and the quality of the comprehension instruction offered by elementary school teachers involved 9 teachers in the first year and 11 teachers in the second. In each year of the study, the same research procedures were followed, with researchers observing the teachers, then working with teachers on ways to incorporate more comprehension instruction in their classes. The researchers used a modified version of the N. Boyan and W. Copeland supervision model that gives guidelines for bringing about teacher change using clinical supervision techniques. A comparison of the pre- and post-intervention observation data showed improvement in all areas measured for both years. The results of the second-year observations of the first-year subjects also showed that the positive changes in teaching behavior were sustained, even after the intervention had stopped. The second-year teachers also showed positive changes in their attitudes concerning their ability to teach reading. (FL)

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IMPROVING THE TEACHING OF COMPREHENSION IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS:

A SECOND YEAR REPORT

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This paper presents the second year report of a research project which was designed to develop ways to improve both the quantity and the quality of the comprehension instruction of in-service teachers in elementary classrooms. Previous research in reading comprehension instruction generated concerns about the quantity and quality of such instruction in elementary classrooms. In a widely quoted observational study, Durkin (1979) reported the following results: 1. practically no comprehension instruction was done in classrooms; 2. the time which was devoted to comprehension instruction consisted predominately of comprehension assessment; 3. teachers taught phonics and word recognition skills rather than comprehension skills, and; 4. teachers were primarily assignment givers and checkers. Hodges (1980) questioned both Durkin's definition of comprehension and the way in which she operationalized it in her scheme for categorizing teaching behavior. However, in a follow-up study, Kurth and Greenlaw (1981) found evidence of many of the same instructional patterns reported by Durkin, and their results substantiated the major findings of Durkin's study. Specifically, Kurth and Greenlaw found that: 1. teachers spend most of their reading instruction time in teaching phonics and word recognition skills; 2. when comprehension was taught, it was generally taught on a one-to-one basis rather than as part of directed instruction;

3. an average of 19 per cent of the instructional time was spent in non-instructional activities; and 4. although teachers grouped for reading instruction, these groupings were not used to individualize instruction to meet pupil's needs.

However, simply reporting these existing practices appears to be little more than "cursing the darkness" if no attempts are made to modify teachers' instructional practices. Thus, the general purpose of this two-year study was to develop model procedures for working with inservice elementary teachers to modify instructional practices during reading instruction. A model of intervention developed by Boyan and Copeland (1968) was adapted for use in this study. After reviewing data from the previous studies which had examined teaching practices during formal reading instruction, the researchers decided that the specific goals of this study would be to encourage teachers; 1. to incorporate more direct teaching of comprehension during formal reading instruction; 2. to maintain a more equitable balance between the instructional time devoted to word recognition instruction and time devoted to comprehension instruction; 3. to promote independent level reading during formal reading instruction; and 4. to minimize the amount of instructional time used for non-instructional or transitional activities.

The First Year

The subjects for the first year of this study were nine certified elementary classroom teachers, three each from second, third, and fourth grade classrooms in a suburban elementary school

in North Texas with a student population of 630 pupils. The researchers were invited by the principal of the school to conduct the study in his building. The nine primary teachers all volunteered to become part of the study; however, the principal's interest in the study was undoubtedly a factor in the teachers' decisions to volunteer.

At the beginning of the first year of the study, observers monitored the formal reading instruction in each of the nine classrooms during the fourth, fifth and sixth weeks of the fall semester. The times for the formal reading instruction were altered in order that three observers could observe all nine classrooms. The observers were three graduate students in reading who had been part of the 1981 comprehension project and were trained in the observation procedures used in that study. These observers monitored and recorded the following: 1. the type of comprehension instruction done by each teacher; 2. the amount of comprehension instruction of each type done by each teacher; 3. the amount of time spent in word recognition activities; 4. the amount of time spent in non-instructional or transitional activities; and 6. the number of students reading on their independent level during formal reading instruction. An identical summary observation was done during the 33rd, 34th, and 35th weeks of the school year by the same observers.

The intervention team was composed of three other graduate students in reading and a college professor of reading education. The major goals of the project were developed by the researchers and presented to the nine teacher subjects. The researchers met with the teachers and discussed the research which had led to the formulation of specific

project objectives. These beginning sessions with individuals and with groups of teachers were used to stress the idea that the intervention team was there to assist teachers rather than act in an evaluative role.

The intervention team spent three mornings each week for two semesters working with the nine volunteer teachers participating in the study. The mornings were spent either in observing reading instruction done by the subjects or in giving demonstration lessons. Three times each week, either after the school day, or during individual teachers' planning sessions, the researchers met with individual teachers to discuss various teaching strategies. Most of this time was used to develop lesson plans for comprehension.

One of the findings of the previous study (Kurth and Greenlaw, 1981) was that a distinct difference could be seen in the approach used by teachers when teaching comprehension skills as compared to the approach used by teachers when teaching word recognition skills. In most instances, when a teacher was focusing on a word recognition skill, a period of direct instruction was used during which time the teacher discussed strategies for using the skill being taught. Then an assignment was given, and the children proceeded to apply the skill just taught. However, during comprehension instruction, teachers rarely used direct instruction. Instead, they simply gave a comprehension assignment and then assisted individual children if they had difficulty answering certain comprehension questions. Thus, most of the instruction in comprehension was done on a teacher to individual pupil basis in contrast to word recognition instruction which was done on a group

basis. This finding that teachers use very little direct instruction in comprehension teaching is substantially the same finding as Durkin reported and classified as "mentioning". When faced with teaching comprehension tasks, teachers simply "mentioned" the task with a cursory overview and then asked children to do the task. This same pattern was found in the teaching of the nine subjects in the present study. The initial observations showed that the average amount of formal reading instruction time devoted to direct teaching of comprehension skills was 2 per cent for second grade teachers, 12 per cent for third grade teachers and 9 per cent for fourth grade teachers. Therefore, the project team encouraged teachers to increase the amount of time they spent in the direct teaching of comprehension skills. In order to encourage this type of teaching, it became necessary for project researchers to write lesson plans based on specific comprehension skills and then to present them as demonstration lessons in the various classrooms. The criteria for these lessons included the following; 1. a measurable comprehension objective; 2. a period of at least four minutes of direct instruction in comprehension strategies; and 3. the application and assessment of the skill being taught.

While working with the teachers on lesson planning, project researchers found that teachers had difficulty formulating specific objectives for comprehension lessons. They often stated their objectives in vague generalities such as "read to understand the story" or "read to answer the questions in "Rainbows". This was in direct contrast to their objectives for word recognition lessons which were very specific. The lack of specificity in comprehension objectives seemed to substantiate

what Lanier and Floden (1978) reported when they claimed "teachers need help in having knowledge translated into articulate sets of curricula." Once the objective for teaching was clarified, teachers were able to begin developing excellent plans. Another area of emphasis in the lesson planning sessions was the encouragement given to teachers to develop longer periods of direct instruction in comprehension. As teachers became more adept in developing plans, the length of the periods of direct instruction became longer. The materials for these comprehension lessons were taken from the basal reading materials and supplementary materials which were available in the school building. Over a period of several weeks, the teachers and researchers developed and shared a collection of plans for teaching specific comprehension skills. However, as they became more proficient in lesson planning, the project teachers no longer relied as heavily on the plan library; rather they seemed to gain confidence in their ability to write plans which met the needs of their own classrooms. Thus, the process of learning to write plans for comprehension teaching rather than the product (the plan itself) became the most valuable part of the project experience. Also as teachers became proficient at planning for specific lessons, they also became much better at adapting their plans to fit the needs of individual students or groups without losing the general objective of the lesson. In fact, many of the teachers realized that the more careful and structured their planning, the more flexible their teaching seemed to become.

The post intervention observation results showed that the average amount of formal reading instruction time devoted to the direct teaching

of comprehension was 36 per cent for the second grade teachers, 39 per cent for the third grade teachers and 44 per cent for the fourth grade teachers. The results of the pre intervention and the post intervention observations of direct instruction are compared in Table 1 below.

Insert Table 1 here

Another objective for the study was to help teachers achieve a more equitable balance between instructional time devoted to word recognition instruction and instructional time devoted to comprehension instruction. The pre intervention observers found that the second grade teachers spent an average of 38 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching word recognition skills and 26 per cent of the formal reading time teaching comprehension skills. The fourth grade teachers spent 34 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching word recognition skills and 29 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching comprehension skills. It is also important to note that the comprehension skill teaching was generally done on a teacher to individual child basis whereas the word recognition instruction was generally done on a group basis. This would tend to inflate the comprehension teaching time.

Because the faculty of this particular elementary school felt very strongly that instruction in word recognition skills, especially phonics instruction, was a very important element in the teaching of reading, the intervention team never suggested

that the percentage of time devoted to word recognition instruction be decreased. Rather, the researchers continued to stress the idea that comprehension instruction is central to an excellent reading program. As the intervention team continued to focus on comprehension and as teachers gained more confidence in their ability to teach comprehension tasks, they began to devote more time to teaching comprehension skills. They also expressed feelings of satisfaction with their ability to teach comprehension. The post intervention observation results showed that the second grade teachers spent an average of 31 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching word recognition skills and 36 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching comprehension skills. The third grade teachers spent an average of 24 per cent of the formal reading instructional time teaching word recognition skills and 36 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching comprehension skills. The fourth grade teachers spent 18 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching word recognition skills and 52 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching comprehension skills. The pre intervention and post intervention observation results are compared in Table 2 below.

Insert Table 2 here

The post intervention results show that teachers did spend more time teaching comprehension skills than word recognition skills. A possible reason for this change in teacher behavior was stated by Duffy (1982): "Time on task is affected by what teachers feel they

can teach successfully and that teachers will spend more time on tasks that they feel comfortable and successful in teaching."

A third objective of the study was to increase the amount of independent reading done by children in the reading classes. Data from the previous study (Kurth and Greenlaw, 1981) had shown that even though all teachers observed had used three groups for teaching reading, little or no modification of instruction either in content or methodology was done for any of the groups. Because teachers often used exactly the same materials for students in each group, students were often attempting to read material that was either too difficult or too easy for them. The pre intervention observation results showed that, on an average, only 35 per cent of the second grade students were reading on their independent level each day, an average of 46 per cent of the third grade students read on their independent level each day, and an average of 30 per cent of the fourth grade students read on their independent level each day.

By encouraging teachers to have children read on their independent levels each day, it was hoped that teachers would learn to modify the formal reading instruction so that it would meet the needs of individual children. The researchers helped teachers ascertain reading levels for individual students by using abbreviated informal reading inventories and by providing examples of short, carefully graded materials on many levels. These materials were taken from the basal readers, supplementary basal readers, and from trade books available in the school. At first, the teachers felt very overwhelmed by this project task, but with encouragement from the project staff, they realized

that providing independent level reading passages was not as difficult or time consuming as they had first imagined it would be. The teachers also enlisted the students' help in monitoring their reading success, and students became adept at judging materials which were suitable for them. The post intervention observation results showed that an average of 82 per cent of the second grade students, 96 per cent of the third grade students, and 84 per cent of the fourth grade students read on their independent level each day during formal reading instruction. The pre intervention and post intervention observation results are compared in Table 3 below.

Insert Table 3 here

The final objective of the first phase of the study, to encourage teachers to minimize the amount of instructional time used for non-instructional or transitional activities, resulted from the previous finding (Kurth and Greenlaw, 1981) that approximately 20 per cent of the total formal reading instruction time was spent on transitional or noninstructional activities. The pre intervention observation results showed that the average per cent of formal reading instruction time devoted to transitional or non instructional activities was 19 per cent for second grade, 21 per cent for third grade, and 15 per cent for fourth grade. In this observation category, unlike any of the other categories, there was a great deal of variance from teacher to teacher. For example, one second grade teacher devoted a total of 38 per cent of the reading instruction time to transitional or non instructional activities. Because of the wide variance from teacher to teacher, the researchers emphasized management skills only in those

classrooms where management of reading instruction appeared to be a serious problem. Again demonstration lessons were given by the project researchers, and specific management skills were discussed with teachers during the planning periods. The results of the post intervention observation showed almost as great a variance from teacher to teacher in this category as the pre intervention observation results had shown. However, improvement was dramatic for the two teachers who had had the highest per cent of reading instruction time devoted to non-instructional activities on the pre intervention observation. The post intervention observation results showed that the average per cent of formal reading instruction time devoted to transitional and non instructional activities was 14 per cent for second grade, 16 per cent for third grade, and 12 per cent for fourth grade. The pre intervention and post intervention observation results are compared in Table 4 below.

Insert Table 4 here

A comparison of the pre and post intervention observation results showed improvement in all of the areas measured. Thus after the first year, the researchers concluded that, with a great effort on the part of an intervention team, it is possible to increase positive practices in reading.

The Second Year

The second phase of this study was designed to replicate the study design used in the first year with another faculty in another school setting. Another objective of the second year phase of the

study was to determine whether the changes in teacher behavior which had occurred in the first year teachers would be self sustaining and continue after the intervention team had left. The second phase of the study was conducted at another elementary school in the same suburban school district. This school had almost the same number of students as the original school; however, the socioeconomic level of the students was lower middle class rather than middle class. Again, the researchers were invited into the building by the building principal, and only teachers who volunteered were used as subjects.

Eleven teachers, three second grade, three third grade, two fourth grade, and three fifth grade teachers volunteered as subjects for the study. The same methods were used as in the first year study. The second year teachers were also asked to fill out an attitude questionnaire at the end of the intervention program. The same objectives which had been used for the first year study were used with the second year subjects, and the observation methods and intervention schedules were the same as the first year study. The only major difference was the addition of the fifth grade teachers.

The results of the second year study concerning the first objective which was to increase the amount of formal reading instruction time devoted to the direct teaching of comprehension were very similar to the results of the first year study. The initial observation results showed that the average amount of formal reading instruction time devoted to the direct teaching of comprehension skills was 6 per cent for second grade teachers, 9 per cent for third grade teachers, 14 per cent for fourth grade teachers, and 11 per cent for fifth grade

teachers. The post intervention observation results showed that the average amount of formal reading instruction time devoted to the direct teaching of comprehension skills was 24 per cent for second grade teachers, 41 per cent for third grade teachers, 32 per cent for fourth grade teachers, and 39 per cent for fifth grade teachers. The results of the pre intervention and the post intervention observations of direct instruction for the second phase of the study are shown in Table 5 below.

Insert Table Five here

The second objective for the studies was to help teachers achieve a more equitable balance between instructional time devoted to word recognition instruction and instructional time devoted to comprehension instruction. Again the results of the first year and the second year of the study were very similar. The pre intervention observation results showed that the second grade teachers spent an average of 31 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching word recognition skills and 21 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching comprehension skills. The third grade teachers spent an average of 33 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching word recognition skills and 19 per cent of the time teaching comprehension skills. The fourth grade teachers spent an average of 39 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching word recognition skills and 24 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching comprehension skills. The fifth grade teachers spent an average of 30 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching word recognition

skills and 28 per cent of the instruction time teaching comprehension skills.

The post intervention observation results showed that the second grade teachers spent an average of 22 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching word recognition skills and 36 per cent of the time teaching comprehension skills. The third grade teachers spent an average of 21 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching word recognition skills and 42 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching comprehension skills. The fourth grade teachers spent an average of 31 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching word recognition skills and 39 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching comprehension skills. The fifth grade teachers spent an average of 21 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching word recognitions skills and 41 per cent of the formal reading instruction time teaching comprehension skills. These pre intervention and post intervention observation scores are compared in Table 6 below.

Insert Table 6 here

The third objective of the study was to help teachers increase the amount of independent reading done by children in the reading classes. Again the same methods used the previous year were used to attempt to attain this objective in the second year study. The pre intervention observation results showed that, on an average, only 26 per cent of the second grade students were reading on their independent level each day, an average of 35 per cent of the third grade students read on their independent level each day, an average of 21 per cent

of the fourth grade students read on their independent level each day, and an average of 35 per cent of the fifth grade students read on their independent level each day. These results were lower than those found in the previous year's study. The post intervention observation results showed that, on an average, 74 per cent of the second grade students read on their independent level each day, an average of 81 per cent of the third grade students read on their independent level each day; an average of 89 per cent of the fourth grade students read on their independent level each day; and an average of 73 per cent of the fifth grade students read on their independent level each day. The results were slightly lower than those found in the previous year's study, but they still show considerable improvement from pre intervention to post intervention results. The pre intervention and post intervention observation results are compared in Table 7 below.

Insert Table 7 here

Another objective of the intervention team was to encourage teachers to minimize the amount of instructional time used for non-instructional or transitional activities. The pre intervention observation results for the second year subjects showed that the average per cent of formal reading instructional time devoted to transitional or non instructional activities was 12 per cent for second grade, 33 per cent for third grade, 18 per cent for fourth grade, and 26 per cent for fifth grade. The post intervention results for the second year subjects showed that the average per cent of formal reading instructional time devoted to transitional or non instructional activities was 10 per cent for

second grade, 21 per cent for third grade, 12 per cent for fourth grade, and 19 per cent for fifth grade. Again, in this category, there was a great deal of variance from teacher to teacher. Even though management skills were not stressed in all of the classrooms, even the teachers who were relatively effective in this area at the beginning of the study became more aware of how they used instruction time, and improvements were noted for all teachers.

Another objective of the second year study was to measure whether the changes in teaching behavior on the part of the first year subjects would be self sustaining through the next year without the continuing presence of the research team. The high level of teacher enthusiasm at the end of the first year of the project led the researchers to believe that they would continue to practice some of the newly learned teaching behaviors. In order to determine whether these changes in teacher behavior would be self-sustaining, seven of the original nine subjects who were still teaching in the same school were observed during the 12th and 15th weeks of the school year. These second year observation reports showed that the teachers were still practicing the teaching behaviors at approximately the same level they had used at the end of the previous year. Thus the researchers concluded that for at least the two weeks they were observed, the first year subjects were still using the teaching strategies that they had been taught the previous year.

Discussion

A comparison of the pre and post intervention observation results

showed improvement in all of the areas measured for both of the years of the study. The results of the second year observations of the first year subjects also show that the positive changes in teaching behavior were sustained the next year even when the intervention team was not in the school. This was true at least for those teachers who stayed in the same school environment. The second year teachers also showed positive changes in their attitudes concerning their ability to teach reading.

The researchers in this study used a modified version of the Boyan and Copeland (1968) supervision model which gives guidelines for bringing about teacher change using clinical supervision techniques. The implementation of the eight guidelines of the model and their effectiveness in bringing about teacher change will be discussed in this last section of the paper. The model is founded on the belief that the supervision process, if it is to be successful, must be based on a colleagial supervisor-teacher relationship. The researchers in this study acted as supervisors in the sense that they observed teachers, gave feedback about performance, and worked to help teachers move toward self-improvement. The value of a staff development model predicated on the idea of colleagueship will be discussed as well as some of the difficulties facing those who propose such a model in the real school situation. Also, experiences in this study will be used to make some generalizations and suggestions about positive future directions in inservice education.

The first premise of the supervision model assumes that many of the problems teachers encounter in the classroom can be resolved

if the teacher can change his or her behavior in positive ways. Students' abilities, home environments, and attitudes, as well as factors such as school climate and administrative decisions, have a great influence on the classroom situation and are beyond the control of the teacher. Because of these factors, teachers often do not recognize the importance of their own behaviors on student achievement. This model assumes that many difficulties in teaching reading can be overcome by a change in teaching behavior. Teachers must feel that what they do in the classroom has an effect on the students' learning outcomes.

The second guideline suggested by the model was that changes in behavior must come from within. Boyan and Copeland (1968) and other theorists in the areas of supervision and staff development (Harris, 1975; Erickson, 1977, 1981; Dupuis et. al., 1978) note that an exploration of the perceived needs of the participants must be a beginning step in any staff development effort. Alfonso and Goldsberry (1982) point out that too often schools adopt a participative approach in the pursuit of predetermined objectives regardless of the appropriateness or importance of these targets as perceived by the teachers. In this study, the researchers themselves devised the objectives which were used in the study based on their observations in previous studies, independent of any suggestions by the teachers. In this respect, the study violated one of the guidelines of the model. However, the researchers shared the previous research results which influenced the forming of the study objectives, and subjects became enthusiastic about the skills they were learning. Ideal planning for inservice education would certainly include input from careful observations

of real needs which the teachers might have and also perceived needs of the teachers. The third premise of the model is that teachers are often unaware of many teaching and learning behaviors that occur in their classrooms. The reasons for this lack of awareness are many, including the following: too much happens too rapidly in the classroom, teachers are seldom equipped with the specific skills necessary for labeling classroom behavior, and systematic observation is difficult to maintain while teaching. Teachers in this study were often unaware of the time spent on different aspects of instruction.

Boyan and Copeland (1968) propose that increased awareness of teaching and learning behaviors in the classroom can help teachers recognize needed changes. Much inappropriate teaching occurs because teachers are unaware of their behavior. When given specific information, (Kingore & Kurth, 1981) teachers can use that information to change their behaviors and improve instruction.

The fifth premise of the model is that existing teaching and learning behaviors can be revealed to the teacher through systematic observation. To alter teaching behavior, the teacher must be able to see what is taking place in the classroom. Observation does not automatically improve instruction. In fact, as has been noted elsewhere, some of the aspects of teacher improvement required almost overwhelming effort on the part of researchers and teachers; however, the observations by the researchers and their feedback proved to be a valuable method for increasing the teachers' awareness and for changing behaviors. Garman (1982) notes that any supervision or staff development program can be helped by classroom observation when the observation is specific

and revolves around behavior that is of interest to the teacher. Efforts were made in this study to structure all classroom observations around specific objectives and to answer questions posed by teachers about their own behaviors.

The sixth premise of the model provides that, since it is difficult for the teacher to apply systematic observation techniques while teaching, a trained observer is needed. The researchers in this study were trained in their observations of teachers' use of time, grouping strategies, and techniques for teaching comprehension. No effort was made to include the teachers as observers of each other. Some type of peer supervision would perhaps have been helpful and offers a promising direction in changing teacher behaviors.

In the seventh premise of the model, it is proposed that the observer must present the observation results to the teacher in a way that will allow the teacher to accept them as valid, to internalize them, and to use them to identify needed changes. The usual purpose for observation in our school settings is for evaluation. Teachers have difficulty, because of the threatening aspects of such observations, in accepting and internalizing the results. Efforts were made in this study to develop a colleagial relationship between the researchers and the teachers so that feedbacks could be done in a systematic, non threatening way. Also helpful in this regard was the fact that all members of the intervention team taught demonstration lessons and were willing to be observed by the subjects and listened to the reactions and observations of the subjects. If the intervention team had not been open to teacher observation, it is doubtful that much

teacher behavior would have changed. The benefits of colleagueship have been well established in the literature on supervision (Alfonso & Goldsberry, 1982; Cogan, 1972). Researchers made every effort to act in a colleagial role. Probably one of the most helpful aspects for developing collegiality was the great amount of time which the intervention team spent in the classrooms. A colleagial relationship takes a certain amount of time to develop.

The eighth premise states that the teacher will accept and internalize observation results best when there is a "no threat" relationship between the teacher and the supervisor. The researchers in this study noted the difficulty of achieving such a relationship even though they stressed from the beginning that they were not in any way in an evaluative role. The researchers had to work closely with the teachers in the classrooms and experience their problems to be accepted by the teachers in a true give-and-take manner. There is a critical difference between the evaluative, administrative role and the supervising, colleagial role in improving instruction. Even in the non-threatening atmosphere of the research situation, teachers were, at first, fearful. Differentiating supervision to improve instruction from evaluation presents a great challenge to those who wish to move research findings into practice. The principal who is an effective instructional leader might be a source of study. How do these successful principals manage to separate helping and evaluation functions? A study of the supervisory behaviors of effective principals might be beneficial in finding ways to move research findings into practice.

In summary, the researchers in this study were able to increase

positive practices in several important areas: comprehension instruction, instructional time, and differentiated instruction for different groups of students. However, these changes were made only with an extreme outlay of time and energy on the part of both teachers and researchers. The program described in this paper involved many after-school sessions, and researchers worked diligently in locating materials and writing detailed lesson plans. The researchers gained insights into teachers' real problems associated with the lack of time to do the tasks considered sound educational practice and good reading comprehension instruction. The development of the colleagial relationship was time-consuming and difficult. The researchers did not, at first, meet a completely open, willing group even though participation in the program was voluntary and the project had the active support of both principals. Researchers had to work to prove themselves as true colleagues of the teachers before work in actually changing behavior could begin. Continuous monitoring of teaching behaviors on a day-to-day basis was necessary for continued improvement. In short, the task of improving comprehension instruction can be done, but it calls for continuous, almost Herculean efforts. However, it can result in marked improvements in instructional performance which appear to be long lasting.

One of the real issues in the research to practice issue concerns who will provide the efforts necessary to implement changes in instructional practice. Reading specialists or curriculum supervisors often are responsible for implementing instructional change in reading. Some of the diificulties associated with this work are apparent from the study. The ratio of researchers to teachers in the study was

four researchers to nine or eleven teachers. In many school systems the ratio of supervisor to teacher is much larger. Also, as Sullivan (1982) found in a study of supervisory personnel, the time supervisors actually spend in classrooms and with teachers is very limited. Sullivan found that most supervisory personnel are actually engaged in information brokering tasks and seem to function more as nerve centers holding the bureaucracy of the system together. They seem to function to keep the system going as it is rather than in working toward instructional improvement. Sullivan found that only 14 per cent of the contacts made by supervisors were with the teachers, and only 7 per cent of the supervision time was spent in staff development or classroom observation. It may be that supervisory roles will need to be carefully changed in order to facilitate the close working relationship needed between supervisor and teacher to improve instructional practices. However, even though the techniques used in the study were time consuming and difficult, the high level of teacher change which seems to be lasting and the high degree of teacher enthusiasm make the outlay of time and energy worthwhile.

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TABLE 1

PER CENT OF COMPREHENSION TEACHING TIME DEVOTED TO TEACHING DIRECT COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

FIRST YEAR

GRADE	PRE INTERVENTION	POST INTERVENTION
2ND	2	36
3RD	12	39
4TH	9	44

TABLE 2

PER CENT OF READING INSTRUCTION TIME DEVOTED TO WORD RECOGNITION AND COMPREHENSION

FIRST YEAR

GRADE	PRE INTERVENTION		POST INTERVENTION	
	WORD REC.	COMPREHENSION	WORD REC.	COMPREHENSION
2ND	38	26	31	35
3RD	31	24	24	38
4TH	34	29	18	52

TABLE 3

PER CENT OF STUDENTS READING ON THEIR

INDEPENDENT LEVEL

FIRST YEAR

GRADE	PRE INTERVENTION	POST INTERVENTION
2ND	35	82
3RD	45	96
4TH	30	84

TABLE 4

PER CENT OF READING INSTRUCTION TIME DEVOTED TO NON-INSTRUCTIONAL AND TRANSITIONAL ACTIVITIES

FIRST YEAR

GRADE	PRE INTERVENTION	POST INTERVENTION
2ND	19	14
3RD	21	16
4TH	15	17

TABLE 5

PER CENT OF COMPREHENSION TEACHING TIME DEVOTED TO TEACHING DIRECT COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

SECOND YEAR

GRADE	PRE INTERVENTION	POST INTERVENTION
2ND	6	24
3RD	9	41
4TH	14	32
5TH	11	39

TABLE 6

PER CENT OF READING INSTRUCTION TIME DEVOTED TO WORD RECOGNITION AND COMPREHENSION

SECOND YEAR

GRADE	PRE INTERVENTION		POST INTERVENTION	
	WORD REC.	COMPREHENSION	WORD REC.	COMPREHENSION
2ND	31	21	22	38
3RD	33	19	21	42
4TH	39	24	31	39
5TH	30	28	21	41

TABLE 7

PER CENT OF STUDENTS READING ON THEIR INDEPENDENT LEVEL

SECOND YEAR

GRADE	PRE INTERVENTION	POST INTERVENTION
2ND	26	74
3RD	35	81
4TH	21	89
5TH	35	73

TABLE 8

PER CENT OF READING INSTRUCTION TIME DEVOTED TO NON INSTRUCTIONAL AND TRANSITIONAL ACTIVITIES

SECOND YEAR

GRADE	PRE INTERVENTION	POST INTERVENTION
2ND	12	10
3RD	33	21
4TH	18	12
5TH	26	19